

NOMADACRIS UVAROV, 1923 (INSECTA, ORTHOPTERA):
PROPOSED CONSERVATION BY SETTING ASIDE THE FIRST-
REVISER ACTION OF JAGO, 1981. Z.N.(S.)2525

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Following an extended discussion in the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*, the International Commission in its Opinion 998 (1973, *Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 30, pp. 77–79) designated a neotype for *Gryllus Locusta succinctus* Linnaeus, 1763. The effect of this action was to preserve the name *Patanga succincta* (Linnaeus) for use in its accustomed sense for a species of economic significance in southern Asia. The generic names *Patanga* Uvarov, 1923 and *Valanga* Uvarov, 1923, with stated type species, were placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology.

2. Uvarov (1923) had established 19 new generic names in the tribe 'CYRTACANTHACRINI' of the family ACRIDIDAE. Those established on p. 143, in addition to *Patanga* and *Valanga*, included *Nomadacris* and *Austracris*. The group concerned, now treated as the subfamily CYRTACANTHACRIDINAE, includes also the older genera *Cyrtacanthacris* Walker, 1870 and *Schistocerca* Stål, 1873. Dirsh (1979) synonymised under *Cyrtacanthacris* the names *Valanga*, *Patanga*, *Austracris*, and *Nomadacris*, but this action was contested on taxonomic grounds by Jago (1981), who accepted the last three as congeneric, but regarded *Cyrtacanthacris* and *Valanga* as distinct. *Patanga*, *Austracris*, and *Nomadacris* had been published in the same work on the same day. As first reviser, Jago gave precedence to *Patanga* by selecting it as the valid name for the genus. This selection has had the unfortunate consequence of changing the generic name of one of the most serious pests of agriculture in Africa, the Red Locust, universally known since 1923 as *Nomadacris septemfasciata* (Audinet-Serville, [1838], p. 661).

3. Not only is the Red Locust a much more serious pest than the 'Bombay Locust' (*Patanga succincta*), but it has given rise to a literature much more extensive. During the 30 years from 1950 to 1979 inclusive, the *Review of Applied Entomology* (A) listed 114 literature references to *Nomadacris*, as against only 18 to *Patanga*. Replacement of *Nomadacris* by *Patanga* would be a source of serious confusion in the field of economic entomology and of hostility and cynicism on the part of economic entomologists, especially in Africa. We are in agreement that the situation calls for action by the International Commission under its plenary powers to set aside the first-reviser selection of Jago (1981) and to declare that the name *Nomadacris* is to have precedence over *Patanga* and *Austracris* as well as all of the other new generic names published by Uvarov (1923) in the event of any of those names being treated as synonymous with *Nomadacris*. None of

the names concerned has anything approaching the usage of *Nomadacris*. The considerations supporting such a course of action are completely in line with those that largely motivated the Commission in reaching its decision under Opinion 998, but are even more compelling. A consequence would be that the Bombay Locust would come to be known as *Nomadacris succincta* instead of *Patanga succincta*, but the evidence of usage adduced above suggests that this would be a small price to pay.

4. We accordingly ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:

- (1) to use its plenary powers:
 - (a) to set aside the first-reviser action of Jago, 1981, whereby the name *Patanga* Uvarov, 1923 gained priority over *Nomadacris* Uvarov, 1923 and *Austracris* Uvarov, 1923;
 - (b) to rule that the name *Nomadacris* has priority over any and all of the new generic names published by Uvarov, 1923 that may be treated as synonymous with it;
- (2) to place the following generic name on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology: *Nomadacris* Uvarov, 1923 (gender: feminine), type species by original designation *Acridium septemfasciatum* Audinet-Serville, [1838], with the indication that the name has precedence over every other new generic name published by Uvarov (1923);
- (3) to place the following specific name on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology: *septemfasciatum* Audinet-Serville, [1838], as published in the binomen *Acridium septemfasciatum* (type species of *Nomadacris* Uvarov, 1923).

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SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED CONSERVATION OF *NOMADACRIS*
UVAROV, 1923. Z.N.(S.)2525

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I am fully familiar with all the facts of this case, and as a research worker actively involved with the taxonomic as well as the nomenclatural and economic aspects of the problem, I most strongly urge the Commission to comply with the proposal with the utmost expediency. We are here dealing with the name to be used for one of the world's most important insect pests, as well as with that for another of major economic significance. Delay could result in a dilemma for authors and readers in many fields, if not in widespread confusion.

A decision to give precedence to *Nomadacris* over *Patanga* would appear to be the correct one, despite the fact that the latter genus, in a taxonomic sense, embraces several, not merely a single, species and that at least one of these is of major economic significance. Other concerns aside, it is also 'tidier' to relegate *Patanga* to the status of a junior synonym in view of the problems that previously existed in respect of the type specimen of its type species (see Opinion 998, *Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 30, pp. 77–79, 1973).

It is regretted that temporary inconvenience may be caused to those concerned with the Asiatic fauna. On subjective and aesthetic grounds I regret the loss from valid scientific nomenclature (except perhaps as a subgeneric name) of what is, historically, one of the oldest of all appropriately used existing names for an insect genus. *Patanga*, after all, is old Sanskrit for a flying insect pest, even if it has not always applied specifically to locusts!